No. 692 Twopence June, 1961

LIBRARY
SAARC KING SHO
NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM BUILDI

THE

UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

By Magnus Ratter

To set a song in the heart of a people is unique service: when that song is the song of the heart, life is made more gentle; when that song rare indeed, is also the song of the soul, life is made more worthy. Only the great among the great are given the holy privilege of singing the songs that the learned sing as they study their problems, songs that the simple sing as they croon their children to sleep, songs that all sing as they sing their love of their mother-land.

Few in the West are able to appreciate how great Rabindranath Tagore is as we scarce have one like unto him that may help us esteem his stature in his own land: normally we esteem Everest through our knowledge of Snowdon but there is no one who has done for us what he has done for his people. Like as not it could not be done for our culture differs from the East.

We believe that a plate of porridge is only bettered by a plate of porridge with cream; though the East wants, needs the food, they have a resignation toward hunger that gives a strange quiet to their social awareness. Yet they too wake to modern times.

In unique manner Tagore caught every nuance of the eastern soul. His short poems, perfect in their loveliness with a rhythm in their own tonque that enchants, his many many songs are simple as song can be simple. They speak clearly what they have to say. The poetic images are from the life of the singer.

One sequence tells of Baby; is there any other more universal theme? Has any poet, in any human tongue, equalled Tagore in his poems on baby We doubt it.

It is curious that this, the chief theme of mediaeval piety in their many pictures, should rarely have come to words. An evening of songs on Baby in our own tongue would almost certainly have to bring in something from The Crescent Moon.

Always his touch is masterly, he arrives where he will graceful light as a butterfly. What he sings is what every mother knows. It is not the talk of the mothercraft clinic it is the hidden smile deep in the heart of every mother: it is indeed the strength of the lion playing with her cub the hidden yet sure knowledge of the eternal woman, determined by nature to carry life from history to history.

This, joined to the laughter of all children, this is set in words of

simple elegance — the songs are songs, sung by simple people at their work.

Tagore's philosophy, his plays, his thoughts on education, all merit long competent consideration, we keep but to the one theme: his national poetry that may long outlive Gandhi, 'tis too his other theme.

As we pay tribute to his centenary, let us recall with quiet pride that he was the leader of the Brahmo Samaj, the liberal reform movement within Hinduism as the Unitarian Church is liberal reform movement within Christianity. The two movements have parallel history. All of Tagore's ideas, though not his manner of expression, all his thoughts, are our ideas, our thoughts.

Let us close our tribute with a short quotation: "'Where have I come from, where did you pick me up?' the baby asked her mother. She answered half crying, half laughing, and clasping the baby to her breast,

'You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my darling.

You were in the dolls of my childhood games; and when with clay I made the image of my god every morning. I made and unmade you then.

You were enshrined with our household deity, in his worship I worshipped you.

In all my hopes and my loves, in my life, in the life of my mother you have lived.

In the lap of the deathless Spirit who rules our home you have been nursed for ages.

When in girlhood my heart was opening its petals, you hovered as a fragrance about it.

As I gaze on your face, mystery overwhelms me: you who belong to all have become mine.

For fear of losing you I hold you tight to my breast. What magic has snared the world's treasure in these slender arms of mine?'"

ALIENATION AND FELLOWSHIP

By D. Russell Davies, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.M.

The Essex Hall Lecture for 1961
The Lindsay Press, 2s.

There are few more necessary talks than that of making a branch of specialised knowledge available to a wider public, and this year's Essex Hall Lecture is a contribution of that character. It seeks to show how a return to fellowship or integration into society is an important objective in the treatment of mental disorders, and gives some indication of the practical methods used by a professional man to achieve this end.

It is interesting to reflect that the interest of medicine in the problem of mental disorder is a mere infant compared to that which has been shown by religion. The story of the Gadarene Swine reminds us that in the time of Jesus mental illness was considered to be due to demoniacal possession, and the treatment to consist in the exorcism of the evil spirits. This belief persisted during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, with all the horrors of the witchcraft trials, and even to-day there lingers something of this attitude in the uneasy feeling among many that mental disease is synonymous with something wicked or shameful. What simple care was first provided for the mentally sick was supplied by the religous orders, not by physicians, and it was not until the end of the 18th century that public care began to develop. As Unitarians we should rejoice in the work of Dorothea Dix, the American Unitarian, whose magnificent work in the middle of the 19th century marks a beginning of real solicitude for the mentally sick.

During the past 20 years or so we have witnessed a revolution in the treatment of menal disorders, a revolution brought into being by the school of psychologists repre-

sented by Freud, Jung and Adler. The mental hospital is to-day equipped much as are general hospitals, but has other facilities not found in those institutions. We wish our lecturer had told us more about the practical means of bringing a patient back into fellowship with society. Child guidance and psychiatric social workers, the chaplains, who apart from their religous duties arrange weekly discussion groups, and members of the community who enrol as friends of a mental hospital for visitation and other services make an enormous contribution to the task of bringing those who have been mentally sick back into circulation among their fellows. This year's lecture will perhaps stir some of its readers into seeking more information about the treatment of mental illness, and speeding wherever possible what is essentially a religous work.

E. D. DAVIES.

THE STAIR IN THE MIDDLE

By J. Martin Hall

A great American Unitarian, James Russell Lowell once asked, "What is so rare as a day in June?" adding, "Then, if ever, come perfect days." An even greater Englishman, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who nearly became a Unitarian minister, once wrote, "Joy rises in me like a summer's morn." June—perfect days—Joy! Isn't that just how we always think of this month! Great good can come to us in any month, even the most grey, and often does, but in June somehow we expect it. Thinking no doubt about the endless richness of human experience, the countless shafts of pleasure breaking in upon human hearts, this same Coleridge once observed, "What an imagination God has!" What an imagination indeed! Even the gloomiest gentleman in the Bible had to admit, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun." Steady, life-giving, beauty-shedding, honey-coloured light falling about us as if cast from some inexhaustible lap of goodness by someone with a golden touch! That is our impression of June!

As we stand here in June, rather like Christopher Robin on the stair he loves most, right in the middle of the year, we might consider just three ways in which our life is blessed and given some of the qualities of a summer's day.

First, our life is enriched by all that we have enjoyed in the past. There is the love, security and contentment of the home, the years of wonder in childhood, the church quietly cultivating a purpose in life, acting as a seed-bed for a possible soul. Our past itself is a storehouse of experienced and treasured joy.

Secondly, we are blessed by all that we are receiving from the present. Not only have we the accepted, often unregarded gifts: the air we breathe, the food we eat, roofs for our heads, the friends and folks with whom we live—don't forget there are other little surprises thrown in as well:

"It is the month of June,
The month of leaves and roses,
When pleasant sights salute the eyes
And pleasant scents the noses."

Thirdly, besides our present joys, we are blessed by the fact that we have the exciting promise of the future as well. Ahead lies August and the sands. There are far horizons and prospects of more bright days of gladness in the sun.

The top of this hill of vision at which we have arrived gives us a pleasant outlook on either hand, and it is marvellous to be here as well!

"How good is this life, the mere
living, how fit to employ
All the heart and soul and the
senses, forever in joy!"

T'Tyke still ponders the G.A. meetings. Result of the pondering will be seen in the July issue.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

RAYMOND AND THE EDITOR

Raymond was turning over some magazines and papers which were lying on a chair.

"What are these, Uncle George " he asked.

"Just some papers I want to look through," I replied.

"Hello," he said, suddenly, "what's this about Lord Altrincham?"

I looked at him.

"What do you know about Lord Altrincham?" I asked.

"What's he been doing? Let's see —'addressing the congregation.' Oh, in church. Well, I suppose that's natural."

"Raymond," I said, "what are you talking about?"

"Lord Altrincham," he answered. "He's been preaching in a church. it says here."

"Yes," I said, "he preached at one of our London churches some time ago at the invitation of the joint ministers."

"What I can't understand," Raymond went on, "is how he got time off from the magazine."

"The magazine?" I echoed. "What magazine?"

"This one, of course; and then there's his own congregation."

"Raymond," I said, slowly, "what has this magazine to do with Lord Altrincham?"

Raymond seemed surprised.

"Well, he's the Editor, isn't he?"

"No," I said, eventually, "he is not the Editor of this magazine."

"But that's where the Editor comes from."

"What is?"

"Altrincham."

"I am well aware of that."

"Well, there you are, then."

"No, Raymond, there I am not. A great many others live in Altrincham, but none of *them* is Lord Altrincham, either. I don't think Lord Altrincham lives in the area. I believe he lives more in the south of England."

Raymond was silent for a few seconds, then said:

"The Editor lives in Altrincham but he isn't Lord Altrincham?"

"That's right."

"Isn't the Editor a Lord at all?"

"Not that I am aware."

"Hmm. That's a bit off, really, isn't it?"

"No, I don't think so. You seem disappointed. Does that mean that you will now withdraw your monthly contribution from these pages?"

"Well, no, I wouldn't say that, but still..." He wandered off with the air of one thoroughly disheartened. An hour later the "air" had completely dispersed, something else occupied his mind and the Editor was once again in favour.

300 YEARS AGO

"How Unitarians can celebrate" is the sub-tittle of a little booklet produced by the 1662 Committee of the General Assembly. All church and chapel committees have received copies of the booklet and should be considered how their church or chapel is going to celebrate the Great Ejection.

Perhaps your Church or Sunday School is going to mark the occasion by holding a historical pageant. If so the Sunday School Association will be pleased to hear of anything that is being arranged or is under consideration. Please write to the Rev. Dudley Richards, at Essex Hall.

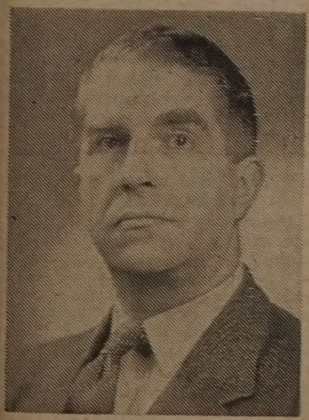
A NEW CHURCH AFFILIATED

At its Annual Meeting on April 29th, the L.D.P.A. received into its fellowship a Church of forty members that was started only last October. With Sir Adrian Boult as its President, the Rev. Robert Taylor as Resident Minister and Dr Jeremy Goring, the Minister of the Lewisham Church as Associate, the new fellowship has made rapid

rides, and its service on unday evenings is now well stablished. Discussion periods fter the service have roved popular, and recently a Musical Hour was arranged by Wendy Boatman, L.R.A.M., who was ble to call on some first-class alent, and Sir Adrian Boult's resence in the Chair greatly ncouraged the young performers. A ranch of the Women's League will pen this month (May).

The Church meets in Essex Hall, n the site of the first Unitarian Church in London, which now con-inues as Essex Church at Notting Hill Gate. The new Church has herefore been called "The Strand Unitarian Church."

About half of the members had no previous connection with Unitarianism. The preaching is positive and practical and some who had dropped off attending Church are finding "The Strand" a spiritual home.



UNITARIAN STALWARTS

A. K. ROSS

To grow up as a Presbyterian in Carlisle between the wars needs a sense of humour. A. K. Ross got through. Greats and Law, Queen's College, Oxford followed.

A first contact with Unitarianism came by discovering "The Inquirer" in the Central Library, Manchester, and after hearing from his father that Prof. A. J. Ballantyne, of Glasgow, whom he had met and admired, was a Unitarian, he found his way to Chorlton-cum-Hardy in 1938.

Hitler also found his way to places in 1938 and A. K. Ross, after serving in the Royal Artillery, found himself in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., meeting heads of newly liberated countries in Europe to discuss supplies. Attended All Souls, Washington, and joined the Inter-Racial Choir, conducted by Dean Lawson, of Howard University (the Negro University).

The war won, back to the Town Clerk's Department, Manchester, the Chairmanship of Wilbraham Road, the Treasurer of the Unitarian College, and founder with Principal R. V. Holt of the Manchester Unitarian Society.

In 1953 he moved to London, appointed a Commissioner of the Board of Control (under the mental health laws), joined All Souls', Golders Green, where he is an active committee member. In 1959 an Act of Parliament dissolved the Board of Control, and he is now a back room boy in one of the ministries. Has assisted the G.A. to supply evidence before Royal Commissions.

His wife, Betty, is active with the Marriage Guidance Council. Three sons help to make up a very happy home indeed. Public service, learning, integrity, humour, and drive—A. K. Ross is a stalwart! The former Presbyterian from Carlisle is a source of pride and affection in his church.

OVERHEARD
after the G.A. Anniversary Service at Monton

"A very nice service, but it is a pity we haven't a Church of our own big enough, without having to borrow the parish church."

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

The Rev. John Rowland, Brighton's Unitarian Minister, was the leading spirit in the establishment of a highly-successful Sussex Branch of the World Congress of Faiths. This branch held a series of meetings at the Royal Pavilion, and, in conjunction with the Society of Friends, a lecture course attended by some forty people at which Dr. Geoffrey Parrinder, Reader in Comparative Religion at King's College, London, was the speaker. In consequence of this, Mr. Rowland, who had done much of the work, was appointed to the London Committee of the World Congress of Faiths. He has now been invited to become Honorary Treasurer of this important organisation.

The Farewell Service of the Rev. J. Reece Walker took place at Newington Green, London, on May 7th. The preacher was Mr. Victor Gollancz. The *Unitarian* hopes to have a special report of this service in a later issue.

Miss Shirley Birks, formerly of Leeds, has taken up her post in the Blind Welfare Department of the Warwickshire County Council. Also in Leamington working for the blind is Miss Judith Kielty who is at one of the Sunshine Homes.

The Rev. Sydney Spencer has been arguing the Unitarian case in the correspondence columns of the local Bath paper. After a letter from Mr. Spencer a retired colonel of the Salvation Army wrote: "Could the Christian case be put plainer? We would like to know more about Unitarianism, especially when some of us know it has handed over to the Salvation Army the use of its own hall for part of Sundays Christianity in practice indeed!"

The Rev. A. H. Birtles was presented to the Queen Mother at the opening of the new headquarters of the Marriage Guidance Council in March. Mr. Birtles is secretary of the Bristol Marriage Guidance Council. Recently a sermon on Eichmann by Mr. Birtles hit not only the local newspaper headlines but also the posters, and eventually led to an interview on T.W.W. Television.

NEWS AND VIEWS
HOME CHURCHES

UNITY CHURCH, Sheffield, came to the end of another chapter in its history on Sunday, March 26th when the Rev. E. D. Davies conducted his farewell services. A correspondent from Sheffield writes: "A crowded church for the evening service revealed the esteem in which we held Mr. and Mrs. Davies. Afterwards we gathered in Unity Hall for a social hour. Testimonies to the work of Mr. and Mrs. Davies, gratitude for all they have been to us, and hope for their happy success in the future was expressed by our chairman, Mr. C. H. Dolphin. Mr.

olphin then gave them our gift of silver-plated tea service and tray nd a cheque for £75.

AINSWORTH, near Bury, held its nnual Congregational Tea and oncert at the end of April. Hosts ere brother and sister Mr. Wilfred othwell and Mrs. Harriet Ann ason, both life-long Ainsworth nitarians. Guests were welcomed an affectionate address by Mrs. ason, who is eighty-six years old.

One Thursday in April the Sunay School children of ILFORD took neir puppet theatre to the Dagenam Hospital and performed three lays. The minister tape-recorded ne dialogue and while the children ere having tea he and Mrs. Dalton erformed the puppet show, with he tape-recorded dialogue, to the omen patients in the tuberculosis ard. On April 22nd the first Arts nd Crafts Competition was held. ver forty entries were submitted om Ilford and Stratford Churches nd over seventy people attended. While adjudication took place the ev. Tom Dalton conducted a film how. Prizes were presented by Mrs. Mitchell the chairman of Ilford hurch.

On Whit-Sunday BLACKLEY held a Jnited Service with the Gospel Mission and also acted as hosts.

Young people in Wales are well n their way to having their own outh Centre. The disused Uniarian Chapel of Cwmwrdu, in armarthenshire, has been given to he young people for conversion into a hostel. Already the Trustees ave carried out a considerable mount of work to put the building nto good repair, and they have greed to institute further building ork to suit requirements. From he young people's end the venture ill begin in earnest with a special ork week-end at Whitsun.

PENDLETON held its first after-service social half-hour in April. There was a good attendance, and the event is to be held every Sun-

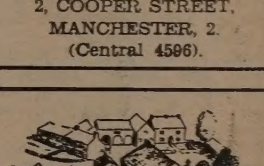
THE MANCHESTER CREMATORIUM Ltd.

BARLOW MOOR ROAD, CHORLTON-CUM-HARDY
(Chorlton 3499)

The Books of Remembrance are on view and the Garden of Rest is open daily for visitors to bring flowers and sit awhile in the peace and tranquillity of this hallowed place.

For advice on cremation and the special remembrance services please write to the

MANCHESTER, CREMATORIUM LTD., 2, COOPER STREET, MANCHESTER, 2.
(Central 4596).



Northern S.S. Federation
UNITARIAN HOLIDAY HOMES
GREAT HUCKLOW, BUXTON
DERBYSHIRE

No increase in charges. All three Homes will be ready to welcome you. Early booking desirable.

day evening.

The URMSTON Players presented "A Policeman's Lot" in April. All members of the cast are Church members.

The first in the series of programmes called "Religious Education for Adults" got away to a fine start at MOSSLEY.

The cup presented by the Bolton District Sunday School Union was won at this year's Festival by HINDLEY. The model of a Palestinian village, entered by a class from UNITY CHURCH, Bolton, won the first prize in the Display Table Section with full marks of three hundred.

Mr. Bertrand J. Batchelor, A.L.A.M., has become Lay-Preacher at CHORLTON for twelve months. In order to make himself available Mr. Batchelor had to decline a well-paid post with car provided.

The Rev. Ralph E. Goddard and Mrs. Goddard are taking a party of forty children to a holiday camp at Minster, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, for a week in September.

Thanks to the loan of a tape-recorder the Easter service at BUXTON was played over to older members of the congregation who had been unable to attend.

Are Unitarians and the Society of Friends to be excluded from the Bolton Free Church Federal Council? They will be if a resolution to be put at the meeting on June 19th is passed. The Rev. E. S. Price is a member of the Executive Committee and his predecessor at Bank Street was a former president.

THE INQUIRER

The weekly organ of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

Every Saturday, Price 4d.

Obtainable from Newsagents, Bookstalls, or your Church. By subscription, £1 6s. per annum from "The Inquirer" Office, 14, Gordon Square, W.C.1.

THE LINDSEY PRESS

Essays in Unitarian Theology

a symposium
Edited by
KENNETH TWINN, M.A.
8s. 6d., by post 9s. 2d.

... a fine production and makes a unique Unitarian contribution to the problems discussed. It deserves the widest circulation and a warm welcome. ...

Towards a New Theology

by **S. P. WHITEHOUSE. M.A., B.Litt.**

2s., by post 2s. 4d.
The Lindsey Press,
Essex Hall,
1/6, Essex Street, Strand,
London W.C.2.

THE UNITARIAN, published by Manchester District Association of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. Annual subscription 4/-. Monthly orders, 50 copies 7/6, 100 copies 10/6 plus postage. *Business Manager*: G. HARRISON, 2, Walwyn Close, Stretford, M/Cr. *Editor*: Rev. PETER B. GODFREY, Dunham Road Parsonage, Altrincham, Cheshire.

Printed by Nuneaton Newspapers, Bond Gate, Nuneaton.